

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 30, 2004

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert,

We are writing to respectfully request your support and assistance for our proposal to arrange a tribute to our fallen soldiers and their families. It is our solemn responsibility to honor the memory of those brave Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice and to recognize their families, to whom we owe a debt of gratitude that can never be fully repaid.

We believe it would be a fitting tribute to the memory of these brave troops to display placards honoring each of the fallen in the Capitol Rotunda. This temporary memorial would provide pictures and biographical information for each serviceman and woman and will include space for people visiting the Capitol to write notes and tributes to be shared with the families so they know that their loved ones will always be in our thoughts and prayers.

It is fitting that we use the Capitol Rotunda to honor our heroes. The Capitol Rotunda has been used for public viewing of the most highly honored decedents throughout our history. Most recently it was used to honor President Ronald Reagan, and has been the site of similar honors for many elected officials and military heroes, including the Unknown Soldier brought back from Europe after World War I. It has also been the site of tributes to dedicated citizens who have fallen in the line of duty, including two Capitol Police officers who were fatally shot in 1998.

As of this writing, we have lost 133 servicemen and women in Afghanistan and 971 in Iraq. This is an opportunity for the entire U.S. Congress to show its strong support for the families and respect for the men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

*"He stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die
That freedom might live, and grow, and increase its blessings.*

*Freedom lives, and through it, he lives –
In a way that humbles the undertakings of most men."*

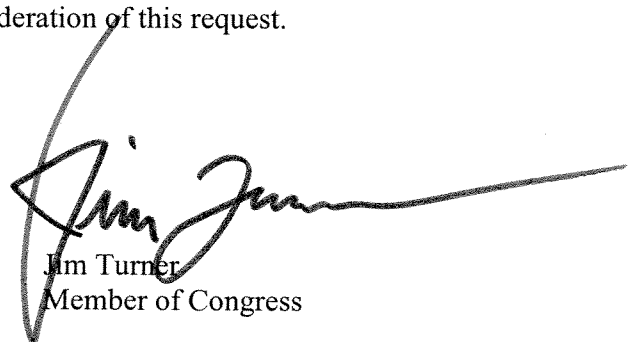
-- Franklin D. Roosevelt

Just as President Franklin D. Roosevelt honored the fallen of World War II, we believe this tribute would honor our most recent heroes and their families. We will soon be circulating a Dear Colleague letter inviting each Member of Congress to reach out to the families in their district regarding this important tribute. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress



Jim Turner
Member of Congress